

“Coolest” Sport in Cool Places: Ice Fishing at National Wildlife Refuges

Crisp winter air. A frozen lake. Why sit indoors, bored with some sitcom, when you could drop a baited hook and line through a hole in the ice and bring home dinner?

You don't have to wait until spring to talk about your fishing adventures. Many national wildlife refuges have just what you're after: Great fish habitat – plus natural beauty and a chance to see other wildlife. Just bundle up.

Find the best fishing spots from the National Wildlife Refuge System's online [Fishing Guide](#). Check your state fishing regulations and license requirements (you'll need one), season dates and safety.

Before you travel, check with the refuge for specific opportunities. Here are some refuges that offer ice fishing

ALASKA

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

IDAHO

Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge

Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

ILLINOIS

Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge, Savanna District

IOWA

DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge

Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge

KANSAS

Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge -- Ice fishing for crappie, white bass and walleye and others can be very good when ice conditions allow access to the lake. (See video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Df-etbKc-S0>)

MAINE

Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge

MICHIGAN

Seney National Wildlife Refuge

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

MINNESOTA

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge
Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge
Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge

MONTANA

Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Nine-pipe National Wildlife Refuge
Pablo National Wildlife Refuge

NEBRASKA

Valentine National Wildlife Refuge
Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge
North Platte National Wildlife Refuge

NEW YORK

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge

NORTH DAKOTA

Ardoch National Wildlife Refuge
Arrowwood National Wildlife Refuge
Audubon National Wildlife Refuge
Crosby Wetland Management District
Devil's Lake Wetland Management District
J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge
Lake Alice National Wildlife Refuge
Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge
Long Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Madison Wetland Management District
Rose Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Silver Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Stewart Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge
Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge
Waubay Wetland Management District

PENNSYLVANIA

Erie National Wildlife Refuge

SOUTH DAKOTA

Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge

Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Sand Lake Wetland Management District
Waubay National Wildlife Refuge

VERMONT

Mississquoi National Wildlife Refuge
Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge, Nulhegan Basin Division

WISCONSIN

Horicon National Wildlife Refuge
Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge
Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge

More info on ice fishing on Recreation.gov: <http://1.usa.gov/1zdtiPr>

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